phase of the National Highways Development Project (NHDP) would cost Rs. 30,000 crore out of which only Rs. 3,000 crore would be from the private sector; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for Government not encouraging the private sector to invest in this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) Feasibility Studies and Project preparation of balance length of about 5800 km of North-South and East-West Corridor under Second Phase of National Highway Development Project is yet to be undertaken/completed. It is too early to determine the amount for private sector participation.

(b) Does not arise.

Roads in Orissa

2480. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the National Highways Government propose to take up during the Tenth Five Year Plan period;

(b) whether any such National Highway would pass through Orissa, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have repaired the Highways in Orissa which were damaged during the last floods, supercyclone, *etc,* if so, the details of the repairs and the amount spent on repairs or reconstruction *etc;* and

(d) whether some damaged highways are still to be repaired in Orissa and the State Government has shown its inability to share the cost for want of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b)There is no proposal to declare any new National

Highway in the country at present, due to funds constraints 316 proposals for declaration of State roads as National Highways received from various States including 16 proposals in the State of Orissa have been returned to the respective State Governments in June, 2002 for review, based on the revised criteria for declaration of new National Highways. The Government, may however, consider declaration of a few State Highways as National Highways during the course of the Tenth Five Year Plan from amongst the modified proposals to be received from various States, keeping in view the traffic needs, *inter-se* priority and availability of funds.

(c) and (d)Yes, Sir. The National Highways in Orissa, damaged during the last floods/cyclone *etc.,* have been repaired. For this purpose, estimates amounting to Rs. 1543.74 lakhs were sanctioned for repairs to roads, culverts and protection works. These works have been completed. The funds were provided by the Central Government.

Tax collection in NER

2481. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the illegal tax collections on the National Highways in the North-Eastern States; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to prevent such illegal practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI):(a)Yes,Sir.

(b) Erection of check-posts/barriers on National Highways within the 'right of way' is not permitted as per the extant policy of the Central Government. However, the State Governments can erect tax collection barriers outside the 'right of way' of National Highways, with prior permission of the Central Government. Central Government has taken up the matter of removal of such check-posts/barriers falling